

**DOMINION COMMAND
DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
2 February 2022
MEETING MINUTES**

File 82-27

In Attendance:	Andrea Siew	-	Chair
	Brendan Heffernan	-	Deputy Chair
	Mindy Pearson	-	Member
	Brian Sauv�	-	Member
	Carolyn Gasser	-	Coordinator
	Mike Smith	-	A/Coordinator
	Ray McInnis	-	Observer

1. OPENING REMARKS

The meeting of the Defence and Security (D&S) Committee commenced at 1000 hrs and began with a warm welcome to Comrade Brian Sauv , a former RCMP member and current President of the National Police Foundation (NPF), as a new member. The NPF is the new bargaining unit for RCMP members.

Parallels were highlighted between the RCL, the NPF, the RCMP and the CAF and we hope to leverage synergies and opportunities for further advocacy.

2. ADMINISTRATION POINTS

- a. **Review of Past Minutes** – The previous minutes were reviewed and approved by the committee.

- b. **CDA/CDAI Gala and Conference on Security and Defence** – The Gala has again been rescheduled from March 2022 to November 2022 due to COVID. The Ottawa Conference is scheduled for 9 to 11 March 2022. There will be an opportunity to attend either in person or via video and Comrade Carolyn will advise as further information becomes available and will purchase the tickets. Both are dependant upon any further COVID restrictions.

3. UPDATES

- a. **Veterans Services & Seniors (VSS)** –
 - i. **Homeless Veterans Initiative** - Comrade Ray explained the Leave the Streets Behind program, that forms will be in police vehicles in Toronto and with the Ontario Provincial Police with the purpose of

identifying and aiding homeless Veterans. Veterans Services contact number and email will be provided as contact on the form. The program will then be launched nationally. Discussions have also occurred between the Legion and the RCMP and the Commissioner supports the program.

- ii. **RCMP Service Sexual Trauma** – VAC/CAF are implementing a Peer Support program for those who have experienced Military Sexual Trauma. There is no similar peer support program for RCMP members. There is currently only peer support for those with Operational Stress Injuries. Comrade Andrea has spoken with Jane Hall, an RCMP Veteran, and an investigation is still ongoing between VSS, D&S and other advocates.

ACTION: Chair and VSS Observer

- b. **RCMP** – Comrade Brendan advised about the support and initiatives regarding Bell Let's Talk.

He told the story of the National Mental Health Champion, Jodie Baulkham, Leadership Design Specialist and Divisional Mental Health Champion, who candidly speaks about her own experiences and challenges as the survivor of a fallen member and her marriage to another member with PTSD.

He spoke about Black History month and how the message is aligned with the RCMP equity, diversity and inclusion strategy, "Uniting against racism".

Comrade Carolyn has reached out to Marketing to discuss ways to support the RCMP in community engagement, special runs, bike rides etc., and will provide information to the Committee as this develops.

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

Comrade Carolyn reached out to Comrade Craig Hood about the engagement they have with the RCMP for Operation VetBuild and other key activities such as Buddy Check coffee. He has tied the two together in many locations and welcomes the opportunity to engage more RCMP Veterans in their programs. Comrade Carolyn will speak with Marketing regarding more visibility to the RCMP.

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

- c. **D&S Briefing Deck** – Editing of the deck continues and is close to being finalized for presentation to the CDS and the RCMP

Commissioner. Comrade Carolyn has provided draft invitation letters for a possible meeting with the Dominion President in April to the National Executive Director, Comrade Steven Clark, and will follow up with him.

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

We hope to meet in person for our next meeting to finalize the Deck.

- d. **Housing Crisis** – The Committee discussed the current housing crisis and the potential impact on CAF and RCMP members. The Committee will continue to investigate.
- e. **Op Harmony Initiative** – Comrade Carolyn is investigating various Indigenous summer employment programs with the CAF and the RCMP and will provide more information as to how we may be able to engage with them.

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

- f. **Swiss Air – Special Service Bar** - The Committee will continue to review and will provide a response to the DEC for consideration in April.

ACTION: All

- g. **Cyprus 1973 – Unit Commendation** - The Committee will continue to review and will provide a response to the DEC for consideration in April.

ACTION: All

- h. **Persian Gulf War Veterans Association** – As per the previous minutes, the Committee is continuing to investigate the request by the Association for Legion support of a request that Persian Gulf War Veterans status be changed to War Veteran. The request is somewhat confusing as there is no designation/status of “War Veteran” in legislation, regulations or policy.
The Committee will continue to review and will provide a response to the DEC for consideration in April.

ACTION: All

- i. **Afghanistan Refugees and Parliamentary Committee** - The government continues to be slow in their actions although a Parliamentary Committee has now been established. We will continue to monitor.

Comrade Carolyn will seek advice from the National Executive Director regarding the best course of action to send a letter to the Parliamentary Committee. It would be similar to the letter sent to the Prime Minister,

the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of International Development, and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

ACTION: Comrade Carolyn

- j. **Definition of a Veteran** – Several years ago the Legion changed its definition of a Veteran to include the RCMP for commemorative purposes.

The definition of a Veteran for commemoration purposes according to VAC is “Any former member of the Canadian Armed Forces who successfully underwent basic training and is honourably discharged.” It makes no reference to our Comrades who served with the RCMP.

For several years, the VAC Ombudsman called for the Minister of VAC, in consultation with the Ministers of National Defence and Public Safety, to amend the definition for commemorative purposes to include former members of the RCMPs in the definition. There has been no action taken to change the definition.

Comrade Andrea is conversing with other advocates, such as the RCMPVA, and Comrade Carolyn will investigate internally at Dominion Command.

ACTION: Comrades Andrea, Brendan, and Carolyn

4. NEW ITEMS

- a. **Nijmegen Selection** – The Nijmegen marches in the Netherlands will be postponed until 2024 as per information received by the CAF. We will call for applications in late 2023 for consideration of the 2024 marches.

Comrade Carolyn inquired about other opportunities to support such as the Victory March that was held last year. At this time there are no other events being planned.

- b. **2021 Mandate Letters** – discussion postponed for next meeting.
- c. **Requirement for a National Security Strategy – CIGI report** - discussion postponed for next meeting.

5. FUTURE MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 16 March 2022 at 1300 hrs. .

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1200 hours.



Andrea Siew
Chair



Carolyn Hughes
Coordinator

Dated this day of 24 February 2022

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